

How to Get Rid of Bags Under Eyes and Dark Circles the Affordable Way

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Anyone who works a job that has any kind of stress level knows that the constant "no sleep" situation is so real. You've probably Googled "how to get rid of bags under eyes" on more than one occasion, and you'd do almost anything (save cut off an arm) to get rid of them. And even after you've tried a million expensive treatments, they usually come back.

Truth is, your eye puffiness and darkness could be inherited. "The undereye area is one of the thinner areas and is easily neglected in basic skin care," says Paul Jarrod Frank, a cosmetic dermatologist in New York City. "There is a strong genetic component to dark circles, which is out of people's control." Womp, womp. Yes, much of the reason you have those circles is because of your parents' own thin skin (thanks, Mom). Sometimes you have them because of an increase in pigment in that area. But don't run to the doctor asking for a pricey laser or needle treatment. Below are ways to minimize the appearance of those circles that won't cost you an arm *or* a leg. These affordable tips go way beyond putting cucumbers on your eyes.

How to Get Rid of Bags Under Eyes

1. If you have dark circles from thin skin, use a retinoid.

"With repeated use, retinol can stimulate the production of collagen, making the skin less thin and improving the dark circles. They are easy to find at the drugstore," says Rachel Nazarian, a dermatologist in New York City. "Retinoids help rebuild dermal collagen and thereby contribute to vascular support in the area and the recovery of skin volume and firmness," adds Patricia Ceballos, a dermatologist in New Rochelle, New York. [← RoC Retinol Correxion Sensitive Eye Cream](#)

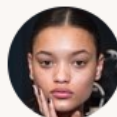
2. Sleep on your back and use an extra pillow.

"If dark, puffy [bags under your eyes] seem to be the morning problem, consider sleeping on your back with an extra pillow so that fluid doesn't pool overnight. Keeping your pillow protected from allergens (dust and dust mites) with a protective encasement can also help when allergies are the culprit," says Rebecca Tung, a dermatologist in La Grange Park, Illinois.

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3. If you have dark circles because of increased pigment, use lightening products and sunscreen.

"Sometimes dark circles are caused by increased pigment, either from rubbing or from sun damage," says Nazarian. "The best treatment for this includes topical lightening agents such as vitamin C, kojic acid, and licorice extract. These ingredients help decrease skin pigmentation over time, ultimately resulting in the lightening of the dark circles." And you must wear sunscreen. "Invest in a broad-spectrum physical sunscreen that contains zinc oxide or titanium dioxide," Tung says.

Try this: Glossier Invisible Shield Daily Sunscreen, \$34 ([Shop Now](#))

4. Take an antihistamine.

"Most people have darkness under the eyes due to allergies and don't realize it. An antihistamine helps clear that up; I like to take a [Zyrtec](#) at night," says Kavita Mariwalla, a dermatologist in West Islip, New York.

5. Try [Preparation H](#) — yes, really.

"Prep H causes blood vessels on muscle walls to constrict. This will give a slightly longer-lasting effect than putting cucumbers on your eyes but may be irritating for some people. I would only use this for special events," says Annie Chiu, a dermatologist in North Redondo Beach, California.

Try this: Preparation H Hemorrhoidal Ointment, \$6 ([Shop Now](#))

6. Be gentle with your makeup remover.

"Consider your under-eyes as sensitive skin even if you may not necessarily have sensitive skin. Undereye skin is among the thinnest on the body, so any trauma or irritation can cause skin inflammation," says [Joshua Zeichner](#), the director of cosmetic and clinical research in dermatology at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City. "If you are using a towelette, try one that is fragrance-free, like [Neutrogena Fragrance-Free Makeup Remover Cleansing Towelettes](#), and take gentle strokes in a single direction rather than rubbing back and forth."

7. Sleep more, or at least get more restful sleep.

"The cheapest way to reduce the appearance of ~~undereye~~ bags is to get on a regular sleep routine of seven to eight hours per day. And don't drink alcohol a few hours before bedtime," advises Chiu.

8. Try tea bags.

"Caffeinated tea, which contains natural tannins, is a mild diuretic and long used by grandmothers and runway models for reducing eye puffiness. Soak two tea bags in warm water, then chill the bags for a few minutes in the refrigerator. Place one tea bag on each eye for five minutes, and your eyes will feel fresh and look brighter," says Karen Hammerman, a dermatologist in New York City.

Try this: Lipton Green Tea, \$6 ([Shop Now](#))

9. Cool down.

If you need to minimize the appearance of dark circles and under-eye bags STAT, cooling down the area is one solution. Cucumber slices, potato slices, gel eye masks, cold wash rags and even cold spoons can do the trick. Whatever you choose, leave it on for ten to twenty minutes and give it a chance to really soothe the skin under surrounding your eyes. Applying something cool to your eyes is especially effective at reducing constricting swollen under-eye blood vessels.

Try this: Dream Essentials Soothing Gel Cooling Eye Mask, \$7 ([Shop Now](#))

10. Avoid excess salt in your diet.

It's common knowledge that sodium can cause you to retain water, but did you know the bloat sodium causes in the body can also cause puffiness under your eyes? Yep — you can retain water even under your eyes. Ridding your diet of excess sodium can help combat bags under your eyes. Your eyes will thank you for cutting back on salt.

11. Use essential oils.

If you're into essential oils, you'll be happy to know there are several oils that combat under-eye puffiness and dark circles. Try mixing an essential oil with coconut oil and rubbing it under your eyes. Rose geranium, fennel, lavender, German chamomile and rosemary essential oil are hailed as the [best essential oils for getting rid of under-eye bags](#).

Try this: Beauty Aromatherapy Top Essential Oils, \$17 ([Shop Now](#))

12. Stay hydrated.

Staying hydrated is one key if you're wondering how to get rid of bags under your eyes. When the body is dehydrated, it responds by retaining as much water as it can, thus causing puffiness and under-eye bags. One way to avoid the bags altogether is by staying hydrated. To ensure you're properly hydrated, stick to the 8 by 8 rule: Drink eight ounces of water eight times a day. That adds up to a half gallon, which is the recommended amount of water to consume daily.

Try this: Kingso Cool Stainless Steel Water Bottle, \$15 ([Shop Now](#))

13. Don't drink too much alcohol.

Alcohol consumption is one of the biggest culprits when it comes to dehydration. If you're drinking your requisite half gallon of water a day and still feeling dehydrated, take a look at your alcohol consumption. Alcohol acts as a diuretic in the body, causing you to lose not only fluid but also electrolytes. If you're suffering from chronic eye bags, reducing your alcohol consumption might prove helpful.

14. Eat foods packed with vitamin C.

Vitamin C (ascorbic acid) is another solution for those wondering how to get rid of dark circles and how to get rid of bags under eyes. Eating food rich in vitamin C helps your body produce collagen. Collagen is a protein your body produces, and one of its top qualities is that it keeps your skin—including the delicate skin under your eyes—healthy, hydrated and dark circle-free. Here are some foods that are rich in collagen-boosting vitamin C:

15. Take collagen-producing vitamins.

You can also take vitamin C as a supplement, as well as amino acids and copper. All three of these will help you produce more collagen and keep under-eye circles at bay.

16. Get enough iron.

Iron deficiency is another reason you might have dark circles. Combat iron deficiency with vitamin B12 and foods including red meat, pork, poultry, seafood, beans, spinach, raisins, apricots, and peas.

17. If you smoke cigarettes, stop ASAP.

Cigarette smoke is known to cause dark circles and damage the delicate skin around the eyes. In addition to all the other benefits you'll reap from abstaining from cigarettes, you'll also have healthier, happier, brighter eyes.

There you have it: 17 top tips from expert dermatologists to help you ward off dark circles and under-eye puffs. Now that you know how to get rid of under-eye bags, put some of these tips to use and bask in the glow of your bright-eyed reflection.

And remember ... when all else fails, you've still got makeup. While you're working on improving your under-eye bags and dark circles, you've got concealer, foundation and even primer to fall back on in the fight against under-eye darkness and puffiness. Some of our favorite drugstore concealers for covering up dark circles are:

- **E.L.F. Corrective Concealer.** Pick up this color-correcting palette that features green to combat redness, pink to add brightness, and two skin-colored tones.
- **Ben Nye Neutralizer Creme Crayon in shade NP-4.** This read more about this pencil is a [miracle worker when it comes to dark circles](#))
- **Maybelline New York SuperStay Better Skin Concealer + Corrector.** This long-wear formula even has vitamin C in it!
- **Sonia Kashuk All Covered Up Concealer.** This award-winning professional concealer is lightweight and blends with ease.

Whatever concealer and foundation you choose, set in with translucent powder to keep your look intact for the long haul.

Facial primer is also a key player in the fight against dark circles. Color-correcting primers with a yellow tint are going to be your new best friend. A yellow primer can neutralize dark, bluish under-eye circles, and because the primer is so sheer, it's easy to blend, explains makeup artist [Joanna Schlip](#). She recommends dabbing a teeny bit over dark circles (try [Make Up For Ever HD Microperfecting Primer in Yellow](#)), and then spreading your foundation on top. "If your circles are very dark, you can tap regular concealer over the primer, and then layer on your foundation," she says. Bonus: Because primer contains silicone to fill in wrinkles, it'll also prevent makeup from creasing in smile lines.

The color of a makeup primer is important--it offsets the color you're going to be concealing. Just remember:

- Yellow and green offset redness and yellow also works against blue and purple under-eye darkness.
- Peach and orange hues also combat green and blue discoloration. Choose peach if you have a really light complexion and orange if you have darker skin.
- Purple fights off yellow discoloration.

Another key makeup tip? If you're suffering from under-eye bags, skip the under-eye liner: lining your lower lashes with any dark color will only bring out the bags. Instead, follow up your concealer of choice with shimmery powder that's a little lighter than your skin—you'll brighten up your under-eye area in an instant!